



# NEWS RELEASE



For Immediate Release  
February 4, 2002

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## **Rep. Honda, Mayor Gonzales Establish Silicon Valley Aviation Security & Technology Task Force**

**San Jose, CA**— U.S. Congressman Mike Honda (D-San Jose) and San Jose Mayor Ron Gonzales announced today the formation of a “Blue Ribbon” Task Force comprised of up to 20 technology, security, business, and aviation experts from Silicon Valley to identify and evaluate technology-driven solutions to improve the security and efficiency of national and local aviation. Once the task force is named, it will have 100 days to develop recommendations regarding existing and emerging technologies that can upgrade systems for passenger identification, baggage screening, airfield and cockpit security, explosive detection and other security concerns. The panel’s recommendations will be submitted by Honda and Gonzales to the San Jose City Council and the new head of the Transportation Security Administration, Undersecretary of Transportation, John Magaw.

“Since September 11th, I have been privileged to work with Mayor Gonzales, business leaders, and representatives from all levels of government to begin the development of a comprehensive, technology-driven security system to keep our airways safe,” said Honda. “The Blue Ribbon Task Force will build upon this collaborative effort by drawing upon the rich mosaic of energy and innovation within Silicon Valley to dramatically improve security, efficiency and technology at our nation’s airports.”

“San Jose is an ideal location to explore technology approaches for making our nation’s airports and travel safer without adding delays for travelers and freight,” said Mayor Gonzales. “Our city’s commitment to innovation and service has already been successful in making our airport a model for fast and effective response to the new transportation challenges after September 11.”

According to Honda, the task force will be ready to begin its work by early March. “We expect we will begin reviewing its findings in June,” said Honda. “This is on a very fast track so that we can share our results with Transportation Secretary Norm Mineta, Undersecretary Magaw, the FAA and other airports and move toward new solutions as quickly as possible.”

Gonzales noted the long tradition of successful partnerships in Silicon Valley. “We have demonstrated that we can achieve results by working with both the public and private sectors and between local and federal governments,” said the mayor. “This is another opportunity to take advantage of our practical approach to problem solving for national benefit.”

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The events of September 11 focused the nation on the need for greater security throughout the aviation infrastructure. Congress and the FAA have enacted broad new regulations for air travel safety, and all U.S. airports are required to implement an array of new security measures by specific dates over the next three years. To ensure uniform and nationwide implementation of these new measures, the responsibility for airport security operations has been placed under the jurisdiction of the new Transportation Security Administration in the U.S. Department of Transportation, headed by Undersecretary of Transportation John Magaw.

The new federal aviation security law includes a key provision authored by Honda that will launch a nationwide pilot program in twenty or more U.S. airports to test new and emerging security technologies. The measure, which is also part of freestanding legislation introduced by Honda and Rep. Jim Matheson (D-UT) in October 2001, could dramatically improve airport security by promoting the development and use of cutting edge technologies, such as biometric authentication, Global Position System applications, enhanced communication systems and database integration protocols. The pilot program is a product of numerous meetings and demonstrations that Honda convened with Mayor Gonzales, top Silicon Valley executives, the FAA, FBI, Bay Area Airport officials and other Members of Congress.

“Silicon Valley is in a unique position to design and implement cutting-edge solutions to meet our new aviation security needs in the shortest possible timeframe,” added Honda. “One of the top priorities for the Task Force will be to help ensure that Mineta San Jose International Airport is selected as a pilot project under the new federal aviation law and so that it can become a national model for security, efficiency and innovation.”

Congressman Honda is a member of the House Transportation Committee’s Aviation Subcommittee and also serves as a Vice Chair of the Democratic Homeland Security Task Force in the U.S. House of Representatives.